



A GUIDE FOR COMPLETING THE PRESCRIBED REGULATORY EDUCATION PROGRAM MODULES INCLUDING FAQ

Store at Section 3B of your Professional Portfolio

This document replaces PREP Module Question & Answers (January, 1999)

The College acknowledges that occupational therapists (OTs) are competent practitioners. The Quality Assurance Program allows the College to support therapists' continued enhancement of their knowledge and skills and is an important aspect of the College's mandate. Today's professionals need up-to-date, reliable resources to be sure that they are meeting all the requirements of a changing practice environment.

Quality Assurance

Under the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*, the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (the College) must provide a Quality Assurance Program to ensure that appropriate standards of practice are developed and maintained. The College must report to the government on the effectiveness of the QA Program.

It is important to remember that the activities undertaken as part of the Quality Assurance Program are conducted in the strictest confidence and are intended to *support* OTs and ensure their practice meets accepted standards, and demonstrates continued competency.

Part of the College's Quality Assurance Program is the Prescribed Regulatory Education Program (PREP), a series of self-directed learning Modules (the PREP Modules) designed to help registrants ensure that they are up to date in the practice of their profession, and that they protect both the public and themselves. One objective is to make the required learning clear, concise, useful and enjoyable.

The PREP Modules

Modules are being developed regularly to help every registrant of the College become a consciously competent practitioner who

- knows what is expected;
- has considered the implications of these expectations and requirements for professional practice; and
- has intentionally applied the learning to his/her practice.

Who needs to complete the PREP Modules?

PREP Modules apply to all occupational therapists, whatever their area of practice. The principles and key points apply to everyone. While every effort has been made to include examples from varying areas of practice, it is up to you to consider how the key points or principles apply to your specific area of practice.

Self-Directed Learning

PREP consists of self-directed learning Modules. You complete them at your own pace and in your own way.

- You can work on the Module in your own time and at your own pace, or work on it with a group.
- You may focus on the material that is most important for you to learn based on your own learning needs.
- You will gain immediate feedback through the practice scenarios included with each Module.
- The College provides the rationale to the practice scenarios. Your review of the rationale reinforces learning and helps you identify any areas where you still have learning needs.
- The Modules provide a review of material you have already received from the College and can be used as a reference guide.

Some people may not be accustomed to self-directed learning, and may find that it takes some attention and discipline to be successful. You can ensure success if you schedule time to complete the Modules. Work with a study group or network with colleagues to enhance your learning experience.

Study in the way that fits your learning style

Everyone has a different way of learning.

- Some people like to talk it over with others.
- Others like to read the material carefully and think about it.
- Some people like to learn their material step-by-step.
- Others prefer a more intuitive approach and like to jump in wherever a topic interests them.

The PREP Modules have been designed to allow you to use your preferred learning style.

Your responsibility for the PREP Modules

You are responsible for reviewing the material in the Module and completing it within a reasonable period of time.

The College requires three steps:

- first, complete the Module and keep one copy of it in your portfolio;
- second, complete the Response Sheet, and submit it online or by fax as indicated on the sheet. This information will be anonymous, but will help the College understand and address the registrants' learning needs as a group, as well as improve future Modules. Feedback, including aggregate results from the Response Sheets, will be published in a future College magazine.
- finally, review the rationale provided by the College and compare them with your answers. Note any further learning needs and track them using your Professional Development Plan (distributed with the Self-Assessment Tool).

Structure of the Modules

This guide will help you navigate your way through the PREP Modules. Review it before you start to help you make the best use of your study time. Each PREP Module has three parts:

1. Learning objectives and Check-List

The learning objectives highlight the key areas of focus for the Module on which the content and Self-Test scenarios are based.

2. Content

Use the content as a guide to the key points that are important for you to learn. The content provides references to key sources and gives you the opportunity to think of the implications of your learning for your practice.

3. Practice scenarios

At the end of the PREP Module, you will find a set of practice scenarios. The questions are based on case studies. The scenarios have been created to provide real-life situations against which to test your knowledge and ability to analyze the issues involved. Record your responses and submit your responses on-line or by fax.

The results will only be collected on an aggregate basis. These results will be used to help the College identify areas where registrants may benefit from additional educational materials.

How to get the most out of the Modules

The College recognizes the demanding lives most occupational therapists lead. The following tips and ideas will help you make the most of the time you spend on the PREP Modules.

1. Set aside time for study

How much time could you set aside at one stretch? 20 minutes? 30 minutes? An hour? However long the time, select a time when you can devote your full attention to the Module, even for a few minutes.

You should be able to read through the Module in about 45 to 60 minutes. The time it will take for further review of College documents is difficult to predict because it depends on whether you have read them before and whether you read them 'in-depth'. Overall, plan to spend at least 2 to 3 hours to complete each Module.

You will find that the Modules break into short 'chunks'. You may find it more convenient to divide the Module into manageable pieces this way.

2. Prepare for your study session

Once you have selected a time, collect the materials you need to review the Module. A reference list is included at the beginning of each Module. These materials are generally in your Registrant Resource Binder and can also be accessed through the College website, www.coto.org.

3. Follow the study steps

Everyone has their own approach to studying. Here is one suggested approach:

1. Review the Module introduction and overview. If you have time, read through the content part of the Module once.
2. Review the Learning Objectives.
3. Note the areas you particularly want to review in the content section.
4. Review the content and other reference material on the issue, highlighting key points as you read.
5. Next, turn to the practise scenarios to check your learning.

6. Work on the scenarios using your preferred learning style (see page 5).
7. Follow up on any issues that are unclear by reviewing the reference materials.
8. When you have completed the practice scenarios, keep the PREP module at Tab 3B of your Professional Portfolio.
9. Complete and submit the response sheet. Keep a copy of your responses at Tab 3B of your Professional Portfolio.
10. Review your choices with the rationale provided by the College, making note of any issues that require further attention which could be added to your Professional Development.

Summary

In summary, the PREP Modules are intended to support you in fulfilling your responsibility to

- know key legislative and regulatory elements,
- consider and assess your own practice in light of the requirements and your responsibilities, and
- take action to ensure that you provide the public with service which meets the standards of the profession.

When you are consciously competent in the practice of occupational therapy, you know your professional and ethical responsibilities. You can explain your decisions, and you deliberately make sure your practice meets the competencies and standards.

The College is your resource

The College cannot advocate on behalf of individual registrants. However, as part of its role to establish and maintain standards for the profession, it has become a strong resource on the most current thinking on professional practice.

When you are aware of the key issues, you will easily identify potential problem situations. If you are in doubt about what you should do, call the College for information on the issue.

You will not be alone. Every year, the College answers hundreds of calls from registrants on particular practice issues — on topics from advertising to how to deal with a difficult client situation. Not only does the College provide specific and current information to registrants (although the College does not provide legal advice), it also shares practice information in the College magazine, *On the Record*, and on our website, www.coto.org. Keep your College magazine in section 6 of your Registrant Resource Binder.

If you have a question or an issue, call the College for advice, or visit the College website — www.coto.org.

The next step is up to you. It's all in how you practise!

Frequently asked Questions and answers

When are PREP modules distributed?

A PREP module is usually sent once a year to all registrants between January and April.

Am I required to complete the modules?

Yes. The Quality Assurance Program, including the PREP modules, is mandatory for all registrants. You need to complete the modules and keep them, along with a record of your responses, in your portfolio.

What if I am on leave when a module comes? Do I still need to complete it?

Yes. All registrants who hold an active registration certificate with the College are required to complete the module, even if they are not currently practising. The information in the module has been written so that it is as broadly applicable as possible. You do not need to be at a work setting to complete the questions.

I have no direct client contact. Do I have to complete the modules?

Yes. College requirements apply to all registrants regardless of the type or area of practice you are in. The College recognizes that registrants work in diverse settings and roles and the QA Program is designed to accommodate this.

What will happen if I don't complete the modules?

Completion of the module, is a mandatory part of the QA program and must be available for review by the College if requested. When you are selected for Competency Review, you will be required to submit evidence of completion as well as review of the rationale for the practice scenarios.

I was not registered with the College when one or more of the earlier PREP modules were distributed. Do I need to complete those modules?

No. Unless you are advised differently at the time of registration, you are not expected to complete earlier modules. If you wish to obtain any previous modules you may request them from the College.

What do I do if I am missing documents I need to complete the module?

Visit our website (www.coto.org), or contact the College. If you require a document that was sent with the Registrant Resource Binder or in subsequent mailings, there will be a charge to replace it. College staff will be able to advise you of the cost for each document.

Is my employer required to let me complete modules at work?

No, employers are not required to provide time during work hours for completion of Quality Assurance activities. Employers are encouraged to support their employees' Quality Assurance activities through such means as facilitating group discussions and promoting professional development.

When and how will I receive the College rationale for the practice scenarios?

The College sends out the rationale for the scenarios, following distribution of the module. Information about how registrants fared overall on the module is published in the College magazine, *On The Record*. You will be able to find out the percentage of other OTs who chose various responses to the scenarios.

Why do I have to submit a Response Sheet?

The PREP modules are intended to meet two important objectives: 1) to assist registrants in knowing and applying the expectations and requirements for professional practice; and 2) to provide the College with an understanding of registrants' current knowledge and ongoing needs. We need to review the responses in order to accomplish the second objective as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of this tool. The data will only be used in an aggregate manner and will be anonymous.

How is the College ensuring confidentiality?

Registrants submit their Response Sheet in complete anonymity to a third party. The College does not receive raw data, but rather a summary report containing aggregated information. Comments are provided without identifiers. The College only sees your individual Response Sheet when you are selected for Competency Review and send your Quality Assurance materials.

Does the College use my score on the self-test to determine my competence?

No. Your actual score on the self-test is not used to indicate competency. At Competency Review, the College checks that you have completed each PREP module, reviewed the answers, and used this information to decide if you have any further learning needs. It is this evidence of your good faith participation in the Quality Assurance Program that is considered.

If we complete the self-test as a group, should we just submit one copy of the Response Sheet?

No. In order to ensure that the data are representative of the number of OTs completing the module, please submit a copy of the Response Sheet for *each person* in your group, not just one for the whole group.

What will happen if I miss the deadline to return the Response Sheet?

We are requesting registrants' cooperation in returning a copy of the Response Sheet by the deadline in order for the information to be included in the data analysis. If it is not returned in time it cannot be included in the analysis.

I've lost my module (or Response Sheet). What should I do?

If you wish to request a replacement module, you may contact the College. There is a charge for replacement documents and College staff can advise you as to the cost. If you decide to re-complete any of your modules or Response Sheets, note the date and reason you've done so on the document. This ensures transparency with regard to these formal records of participation in the Quality Assurance Program.

Is PREP available in French?

Yes, to receive a copy contact the College.

